

## Pointers

● The recent worsening of Cuban-American relations after the inauguration of the **Reagan** administration's new aimed-at-Cuba Radio Marti has led to a clampdown on contacts between Cubans and American visitors, according to our Havana sources. In the past, food parcels and gifts from relatives who have done well in the United States have helped Cuban families to eat and dress better, or to make money selling their gifts for Cuban pesos. There are other signs of unrest in Havana. Unemployment is said to be increasing and there has been a spate of robberies in the capital. Some young men apparently prefer a life of crime to the danger of being picked for military service in Angola.

● A conference to found a new miners' federation linking communist and western unions (FOREIGN REPORT May 19, 1983) will be held on September 21st-22nd in Paris. **Arthur Scargill**, the Marxist leader of Britain's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), and the French Communist union federation (CGT) are sponsoring the new group. The date for the conference was fixed at a meeting on May 10th in Budapest of representatives from the NUM, the CGT, East Germany and the Soviet Union. In preparation for setting up the new group, Scargill took the NUM out of the pro-western miners' association linked to the Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Other western unions are remaining with the ICFTU.

● Conservative Republicans are annoyed about an apparent move to ease **Constantine Menges**, a conservative, out of his post on **President Reagan's** national security council staff dealing with policy on Central America. Seven senators, including **Strom Thurmond** and **Jesse Helms**, have signed a letter to Reagan urging him to reconsider the move. The conservatives say privately that if Menges loses his job, he will be given a post on a senate sub-committee dealing with Latin America headed by Senator Helms.

● **Ayatollah Khomeini** is worried about his opposition. He has sent a directive to leading mullahs and theologians telling them to curb criticisms of the government in their sermons. He says these remarks are being used by monarchist factions and other hostile elements to damage the government. Khomeini wants "positive aspects to be emphasised, because without tolerance the government will be unable to operate".

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